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FM AMEMBASSY DHAKA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4686

INFO RUEHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 9221

RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD 1777

RUEHLM/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 8043

RUEHGO/AMEMBASSY RANGOON 2570

RUEHCI/AMCONSUL KOLKATA 0865

RUEHBUL/AMEMBASSY KABUL 0096

RUEHYE/AMEMBASSY YEREVAN 0003

RUEHKB/AMEMBASSY BAKU 0011

RUEHVJ/AMEMBASSY SARAJEVO

RUEHOR/AMEMBASSY GABORONE 0019

RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 0009

RUEHPF/AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH 0131

RUEHSN/AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR 0112

RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 0135

RUEHSI/AMEMBASSY TBILISI 0016

RUEHAR/AMEMBASSY ACCRA 0091

RUEHRY/AMEMBASSY CONAKRY 0001

RUEHPU/AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE 0032

RUEHTG/AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA 0036

RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 0080

RUEHAM/AMEMBASSY AMMAN 0090

RUEHSTA/USOFFICE ASTANA

RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES

RUEHPS/USOFFICE PRISTINA 0001

RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK 0036

RUEHBP/AMEMBASSY BAMAKO 0024

RUEHME/AMEMBASSY MEXICO 0022

RUEHUM/AMEMBASSY ULAANBAATAR 0020

RUEHPOD/AMEMBASSY PODGORICA

RUEHRB/AMEMBASSY RABAT 0060

RUEHTO/AMEMBASSY MAPUTO 0015

RUEHMU/AMEMBASSY MANAGUA 0017

RUEHOS/AMCONSUL LAGOS 0050

RUEHAC/AMEMBASSY ASUNCION 0006

RUEHPE/AMEMBASSY LIMA 0020

RUEHML/AMEMBASSY MANILA 1455

RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 0085

RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 0095

RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE

RUEHDR/AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM 0039

RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS 0199

RUEHKM/AMEMBASSY KAMPALA 0046

RUEHCH/AMEMBASSY CHISINAU 0013

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 DHAKA 001267

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS TO OPIC / LOREN RODWIN, SENIOR INVESTMENT OFFICER, SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISE FINANCE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: EINV ECON BG

SUBJECT: BANGLADESH: COMMENTS REGARDING CALVERT SOCIAL INVESTMENT FOUNDATION

REF: STATE 103089

¶1. Embassy Dhaka is pleased to respond to reftel's request for information regarding OPIC's potential support for CALVERT SOCIAL INVESTMENT FOUNDATION. Post has no credible information concerning potential ties to terrorism, money laundering, corruption or violations of law by Activists for Social Alternatives, ASA (<http://www.asabd.org/>) or Bangladesh Unemployed Rehabilitation Organization, BRO (<http://nirapad.org/buro.asp>).

¶2. Bangladesh is well acquainted with NGOs in both the commercial and developmental areas, with estimates of over 20,000 NGOs already operating in the country. In fact, the government of Bangladesh has

created an "NGO Affairs Bureau" specifically to assist in dealing with NGOs in Bangladesh, <http://www.ngoab.gov.bd/>. The rules and regulations concerning NGO activities and transfers of money to NGOs in Bangladesh are very specific, and Calvert should ensure that whatever format their engagement with ASA and BURO takes is in full compliance.

¶13. In terms of general security, NGOs have been specifically threatened by various groups, including most recently in notes accompanying the three bombs which went off in three train stations in Bangladesh on May 1, 2007. Overall, however, NGOs continue to operate effectively throughout Bangladesh while taking appropriate and reasonable safety precautions.

¶14. Bangladesh has a long history of violent political protests, and in fact a state of emergency was declared in Bangladesh on January 11, 2007 in response to escalating political violence in advance of the national parliamentary elections then scheduled for January 26, ¶2007. The election has now been postponed to late 2008; currently the situation remains very peaceful as, for the most part, the non-elected caretaker government enjoys popular support. There is the potential for political violence in the run up to the anticipated 2008 elections and even before then as the political parties may press for earlier elections.

¶15. The AFL-CIO has filed a petition with the United States Trade Representative for the suspension of Generalized System of Preferences (GSP). The USTR is currently reviewing the petition, and as of July 2007, has not decided whether to accept the petition

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or not. It is post's understanding that a loss of GSP facilities would negatively impact OPIC's ability to provide services in Bangladesh.

¶16. Post's point of contact for further inquiries is Carter Wilbur, Economic Officer. Email: wilburcw@state.gov; Phone: (8802) 885-5500 xt 2206; Fax: (8802) 882-4008.

PASI